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Activities of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. The General Assembly, in its resolution 50/163 of 22 December 1995, requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Assembly at its fifty-second session a report on the activities of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW).

2. In that resolution, the General Assembly emphasized the unique function of the Institute as the only entity within the United Nations system devoted exclusively to research and training for the integration of women in development; stressed the importance of making its research findings available for policy purposes and operational activities; commended the efforts of the Institute to address poverty, statistics and indicators in gender issues, communications, natural resources and sustainable development, water, sanitation and waste management, renewable sources of energy, and issues related to different population groups, such as elderly and displaced women, refugee and migrant women and women in rural areas; encouraged the Institute to develop further active and close cooperation with the specialized agencies and related organizations of the United Nations system and with other institutions, such as universities and research institutions, so as to promote programmes that contribute to the advancement of women; and reiterated the importance of maintaining the level of resources devoted to independent research and related training activities that are crucial for the situation of women.

3. In accordance with its mandate and the recommendations of its Board of Trustees, the Institute has made every effort to strengthen its dual approach as both an agent for sensitization on the role of women in the sustainable development process and in the mainstreaming of gender analysis and methodological evaluation, and as a centre for specialized research, training and advocacy, particularly in the key areas affecting the advancement of women and in facilitating their empowerment and inclusion as equal partners in development. The present report covers the period since the submission of the Secretary-General's previous report on INSTRAW(A/50/538) in October 1995.

II. Programme framework for the biennium 1996-1997

4. The Institute's work programme for the biennium 1996-1997 was prepared taking into consideration a threefold process: first, the changes of global scope at both the economic and social levels and how women are being affected by them; second, the policy decisions, mandates

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and plans of action of the different United Nations conferences as well as several measures of an institutional nature pertaining to the functioning of the United Nations system; and third, the concrete issues related to the implementation of the 1996-1997 work programme of INSTRAW, including institutional matters relevant to the functioning of the Institute.

5. At the Fourth World Conference on Women held at Beijing in September 1995, it became ever more clear that women's issues were global and universal and that equality of opportunity for all people was essential to the construction of just and democratic societies. The Platform for Action adopted at the Conference was established as a powerful tool for the empowerment of women, aimed at removing all the obstacles to women's active participation in public and private life by promoting their full and equal participation in economic, social, cultural and political decision-making processes. It called for the integration of a gender perspective in all policies and programmes.

6. Bearing in mind the mandate of INSTRAW, which is to serve as a vehicle on the international level for the purpose of undertaking research and establishing training programmes to contribute to the integration and mobilization of women in development, to raise awareness of women's issues worldwide and to assist women to meet new challenges and directions, the Institute's work programme for the biennium 1996-1997 involved activities related to research, training, information dissemination and networking. In addition, the Institute participated actively in policy coordination within the United Nations system.

7. The Institute's research and training programmes aim to be linked directly to the major concerns of the international community as expressed in the plans and programmes of action of the United Nations global conferences, particularly of the Fourth World Conference on Women. The Institute's work programme for the biennium was also structured so as to incorporate considerations emanating from the specific objectives set out by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Rio de Janeiro, 1992), the World Conference on Human Rights (Vienna, 1993) and the International Conference on Population and Development (Cairo, 1994); as well as the objectives set out by the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) (Istanbul, June 1996). The programme was also developed under the guidance and with the approval of the INSTRAW Board of Trustees, fulfilling the requirements of the system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women 1996-2001 and specific recommendations of the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly.

8. The specific activities undertaken respond to the need to understand and correct the societal obstacles that constrain women's participation and to recognize fully, value and mobilize women's dynamic involvement in the development process. The issue of empowerment is embedded in the four priority programmes of the research and training programme of the Institute, namely: (a) women, economic and political empowerment; (b) statistics and indicators on gender issues; (c) women, environment and sustainable development; (d) women, media and communications.

III. Highlights of the Institute's programme of activities

9. The Institute s programme for the biennium was built around those four broad themes, which are discussed in detail below.

A. Women's empowerment

10. The Institute's programme entitled "Women in decision-making and leadership" seeks to increase the participation of women in political decision-making. The programme entails a research component for the preparation of a background paper presenting an overview of the global situation of women in the political arena and the barriers limiting their participation, three case studies, including a gender analysis of the political power structures (within the Government and the civil society of selected developing countries) and a report on the progress of women's participation in political decision-making bodies within those countries. Those documents will be published and will also serve as a basis for the preparation of resource materials containing general guidelines and suggestions for increasing women's participation in decision-making and leadership.

11. Preliminary work has been carried out for the background paper and three case studies to be conducted in Chile, Kenya and the Philippines. In selecting those countries, INSTRAW considered both regional representativeness and the possibility of analysing women in governmental positions in different country situations.

12. INSTRAW hosted and participated in an expert group meeting on political decision-making and conflict resolution: the impact of gender differences, organized by the Division for the Advancement of Women in cooperation with the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute at INSTRAW headquarters at Santo Domingo in October 1996.

The recommendations of the meeting were available to the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-first session (10-21 March 1997).

B. Statistics and indicators on gender issues

13. Adequate and reliable statistics are basic tools for designing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating programmes and projects. The INSTRAW programme on statistics and indicators on gender issues is aimed at contributing to the development of new and the improvement of existing statistical concepts and methodologies.

14. Following the recommendations contained in its publication *Measurement and Valuation of Unpaid Contribution: Accounting through Time and Output*,[1] INSTRAW initiated actual applications of the valuation techniques and methodologies developed in Canada, Finland and Nepal. Using the existing data in those countries, output-based valuation techniques were applied to impute monetary values to goods and services produced in and for the household. Those three countries were selected on the basis of the availability and quality of time-use and other collateral data collected at the national level, as well as accessibility to those data.

15. In 1996, INSTRAW published *Valuation of Household Production and the Satellite Accounts*,[2] a sequel to the above-mentioned study, in which it describes the procedure followed in the actual application of the framework and the imputation of monetary values to goods and services produced in the household for its own consumption. Derived values of unpaid household production were presented in comparison with the values of regular gross domestic product for each country. The results give indications of the pattern and level of interaction between the paid/market and unpaid/household production in different scenarios.

16. The time-use survey methodology designed by INSTRAW for less developed countries was at the same time fully implemented in the Dominican Republic. In collaboration with the national statistics office, the first national survey on time use by women and men in the country was conducted in 1995, and the corresponding database was completed in 1996. The implementation of the survey proved the applicability of the methodology and provided a body of experience that may be useful in replicating the survey in other developing countries. Values have been imputed and are contained in a report to be published in late 1997. One of the immediate objectives of the study is to establish a mechanism to reflect the estimated values of the satellite accounts on unpaid household production in the relevant publication of the central bank of the Dominican Republic.

17. Based on the results of the above-mentioned studies and the overall experience gained by INSTRAW in collecting new statistical information, such as time-use data, and in measuring and valuing unpaid work, INSTRAW has prepared guidelines and training materials on the collection, processing and analysis of data on satellite accounts on women's and men's unpaid work for possible replication in other countries.

18. During the period under review, INSTRAW prepared a training package on the use of statistics and indicators on gender issues in policy design, which contains materials, computerized statistical models and exercises designed to enhance users' understanding of and skills in utilizing gender-specific statistics and indicators in designing policies and development programmes. The package is now in a preliminary format and is ready for pilot testing.

19. INSTRAW also participated in the twenty-ninth session of the Statistical Commission (New York, 11-14 February 1997), at which specific inputs for the discussion of issues related to economic statistics and national accounts and/or demographic and social statistics were provided.

C. Women, environment and sustainable development

20. The women, environment and sustainable development programme uses a holistic and interdisciplinary approach to sectoral issues in the fields of environmental protection, water supply and sanitation; water resources management; waste management; and new and renewable sources of energy, from the point of view of women as users and producers. It addresses in an integrated manner women's roles and activities in areas such as poverty eradication, population growth, health, education/training, water, energy, agriculture, forestry and the like.

21. As a result of the importance that the Board of Trustees has placed on the development of training instruments, special emphasis has been given to the preparation of training materials in the field of environment and sustainable development to advance women's understanding of the plethora of complex issues analysed at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and contained in Agenda 21.

22. Since 1982, INSTRAW has been formulating policy and conducting research and training on water supply and

sanitation and on the development of new and renewable sources of energy, incorporating the perspective of the status of women and their contribution to socio-economic development.

1. Multimedia modular training package on women, environmental management and sustainable development

23. In 1995, INSTRAW prepared a prototype training package on women, environmental management and sustainable development in cooperation with the International Training Centre of the International Labour Organization at Turin, Italy. The training package was revised, finalized and distributed in 1996 and 1997. The revision was completed after a subregional training seminar on women, environmental management and sustainable development for Central and Eastern European countries was held at Turin, from 23 to 27 September 1996.

24. The training package on women, environmental management and sustainable development was prepared as a major part of the Institute's programme on women and sustainable development and in response and follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, particularly Agenda 21, the Plan of Action adopted at the World Summit on Social Development and the Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women. The training package contains materials as well as decisions and recommendations from various conferences and meetings, within and outside the United Nations system. The training package aims to contribute to an integrated approach in the organization and management of environmental policies and programmes through the integration of women's needs as well as their participation in planning, management, implementation and evaluation of environmental programmes and projects. The subject matter is complex, multidisciplinary and integrated into every aspect of society. The purpose of the training package is not to tackle each issue but rather to present overall existing problems and possible solutions and policies on various aspects of the subject matter. Further adaptations for specific country situations should be explored by trainers, university professors and experts in this area.

25. The training package consists of 400 pages of training text, 170 transparencies, a trainer's guide, a bibliography and audio-visual support material.

26. The flexibility of the training package is assured by the parallel activity, that is, the possibility to train different target groups simultaneously. The modular training methodology is adaptable to the individual needs of users. Each module is supplemented by a pedagogical scheme, a lesson plan, audio-visual support material, additional reading material, bibliographies, key issue checklists for group work, evaluation forms for participants and trainers and a trainer's guide. The modular programme is designed for on-site training and includes practical how-to materials.

27. The training package has been developed for the following target groups:

(a) Senior officials of ministries of environment, natural resources, planning, women's affairs, education, health and so on;

(b) Development planners and provincial or local authorities in charge of environmental programmes and projects;

(c) Engineers in charge of designing technologies for environmental projects;

(d) University professors, trainers and managers of national training institutes and educational institutions training staff on various aspects of women, environmental management and sustainable development;

(e) Representatives of non-governmental and women's organizations involved in environmental projects.

28. The multimedia training package on women, environmental management and sustainable development consists of five modular units, namely:

(a) Agenda 21;

(b) Women and environmental health;

(c) Women as agents of change in the development sector;

(d) Women as managers of the environment;

(e) Women, environmental indicators and capacity-building programmes.

29. The training package is available in English. Two thousand copies of the promotional leaflet were also published and widely distributed. The training package was revised, finalized and printed at the International Training Centre in 1996.

2. Subregional training seminar on women, environmental management and sustainable development

30. INSTRAW, in cooperation with the International Training Centre, organized a subregional training seminar on women, environmental management and sustainable development for Central and Eastern Europe, held at Turin

from 23 to 27 September 1996. The seminar was attended by participants from Bulgaria (one participant), the Czech Republic (two participants), Hungary (two participants), Latvia (one participant), Poland (four participants), Romania (three participants) and Slovakia (one participant). The seminar was conducted using the Institute's training package on women, environmental management and sustainable development. At the end of the substantive presentations, each participant presented a plan of action, which consisted of their application of the training package within their jobs and organizations. The presentations were videotaped for use in future activities.

31. Participants were given two evaluation forms: one to evaluate the training package — content, presentation, transparencies; and one to evaluate the overall training seminar — training methodology, conduct of the presentation and organizational and logistical arrangements. All participants evaluated both the training package and the seminar positively. They also expressed the need to have that type of training seminar at the national level. Some participants said they would try to translate the training package into their languages.

32. The final report of the seminar included a profile of the participants (admission requirements, entry profile), the objectives of the seminar, a description of the structure and content of the modular training package and of the structure and implementation of the seminar, methodology, evaluation results, recommendations of participants, conclusions and annexes (environmental data, list of participants, timetable, list of documents distributed, list of documents produced by the participants and evaluation questionnaires).

33. The report was prepared at the International Training Centre and finalized by INSTRAW. One thousand copies were printed at the Centre. Each participant received 30 copies for further distribution in their countries. The report was also distributed to INSTRAW focal points, bodies of the United Nations system, permanent missions to the United Nations and relevant non-governmental and women's organizations involved in environmental activities.

3. Inter-agency activities and participation in intergovernmental meetings

34. The contribution of INSTRAW to sustainable development and environmental management included participation in the Commission on Sustainable Development; the nineteenth special session of the General Assembly on the review and appraisal of Agenda 21; meetings of the United Nations Steering Committee for Water Supply and Sanitation; and the Administrative Committee on Coordination Subcommittee on Water Resources. As a result of the Institute's inputs, women's roles and activities in the water sector were well reflected in the following areas: integrated water resources development and management; drinking water supply and sanitation; water and sustainable urban development; water for sustainable food production; and rural development. The main item of discussion was "Comprehensive assessment of the freshwater resources of the world", prepared jointly by the Swedish Environment Institute and a number of United Nations bodies and agencies. INSTRAW contributed substantively to a background report on gender and water, which was prepared by the Swedish Environment Institute.

35. INSTRAW participated in the third session of the Committee on Natural Resources (New York, 6-16 May 1996). At the meetings of the Subcommittee on Water Resources, under the item entitled "United Nations activities", INSTRAW provided substantive inputs on the current roles and position of women in water resources management, outlining constraints and possible solutions.

36. INSTRAW participated in the meetings of the Committee on New and Renewable Sources of Energy and on Energy for Development at its second session (New York, 12-23 February 1996). INSTRAW presented a statement focusing on current roles and the position of women in energy planning, areas for further research on women and energy and the Institute's research and training activities in the area of renewable sources of energy.

37. INSTRAW representatives attended the Ad Hoc Inter-agency Meeting on Energy at the headquarters of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Paris, 18 and 19 December 1996). The participants discussed, *inter alia*, conducting an inventory of energy-related programmes and activities within the United Nations system, assessment of the linkages between current energy activities and sustainable development and assessment of cooperation and coordination of energy activities at the global, regional and national levels with a special focus on the country level.

38. INSTRAW participated in a workshop on the role of women in sustainable development (Abidjan, 11-13 November 1996), which was jointly organized by the United Nations Department for Development Support and Management Services and the African Energy Programme of the African Development Bank. The Institute's Acting Director gave a keynote presentation on the topic "Policies and strategies for women's participation in sustainable energy development", and chaired a working group on the same topic.

39. The Institute also provided substantive inputs to the following reports: an inventory of ongoing energy-oriented programmes and activities within the United Nations system for the Commission on Sustainable Development at its fifth session; a report to the General Assembly at its fifty-second session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the possibilities of strengthening the coordination of organizations and bodies of the United Nations system in the field of energy within the framework of the Administrative Committee on Coordination; and contributions on women and water supply and sanitation for the report of the Secretary-General on fresh water

40. INSTRAW hosted an expert group meeting organized by the Division for the Advancement of Women on "Women, population and sustainable development: the road from Rio, Cairo and Beijing" (Santo Domingo, November 1996). The meeting focused on the conceptual and methodological aspects of crucial links between population and sustainable development, incorporating a gender perspective with emphasis on women's role in decision-making at all levels, policy perspectives on implementation of the outputs of the environment and development conference at Rio de Janeiro, the population conference at Cairo and the women's conference at Beijing and recommendations on women, population and sustainable development. The Acting Director of INSTRAW presented a statement on those issues and gave an overview of the Institute's programme on women, environment and sustainable development. The Institute's training package on women, environmental management and sustainable development was presented to the participants and experts. Recommendations of that meeting were available at the forty-first session of the Commission on the Status of Women in March 1997.

D. Women, media and communications

41. The programme entitled "Empowering women through the use of computer-mediated communication technologies" involves research in the Latin American and Caribbean region on the extent to which women's organizations are using computer-mediated communication. INSTRAW will prepare a manual based on the findings of that research to assist women's organizations in maximizing the use of computer-mediated communication for research, training and education, advocacy, networking, exchange of information and so on.

42. Preliminary research conducted by INSTRAW in 1995 for presentation at the NGO Forum on Women, held at Huairou, China, in conjunction with the Fourth World Conference on Women, suggested that many women's organizations in the region had access to computer-mediated communication technology, but lacked sufficient and adequate training to use it to its maximum potential. With that in mind, INSTRAW in 1996 initiated a survey aimed at testing this working hypothesis and at identifying the training and other needs of women's organizations in the effective use of computer-mediated communication.

43. A total of 133 women's organizations or organizations with a women's component or programme in the region responded to a questionnaire sent out by INSTRAW. In-depth interviews were conducted with a selected number of organizations that represented "best practice" in the use of computer-mediated communication in their work. The survey focused principally on access to hardware, the type and extent of training, the type and frequency of electronic tools used, perceived obstacles to full use of computer-mediated communication and the features considered desirable in a manual.

44. The data have been analysed and a first draft of the report is currently being completed. Preliminary analysis of the data confirms that while many women's organizations in the region have access to the necessary hardware for electronic communications, as well as an account with a service provider, they make limited use of computer-mediated communication.

45. With those considerations in mind, INSTRAW will prepare user-friendly, target-specific manuals aimed at promoting the use of computer-mediated communication not only for making communication more effective and economical, but also for easing the access to information for research and advocacy purposes. The use of computer-mediated communication in publishing will also be promoted. Specifically, the manual will guide the user to specific sites in the United Nations that might be of interest to women and will provide a directory of sites by topic of interest to women's organizations. The manual will also document cases of effective use of computer-mediated communication for publishing, networking and so on. The results of those efforts will be linked to the joint WomenWatch project, in which INSTRAW participates along with the United Nations Development Fund for Women and the Division for the Advancement of Women.

E. Other activities related to research and training

46. In response to a request of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Norwegian Institute of Human Rights drafted a manual for human rights monitoring for which INSTRAW prepared a chapter on monitoring the rights of women.

47. In collaboration with the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), INSTRAW organized a round table on women and human settlements in conflict zones at Habitat II. INSTRAW prepared all background documentation for the round table and selected the panellists. Participants included researchers, practitioners, politicians and representatives of United Nations agencies. The Latin American and Caribbean, African, Asian and European regions were represented. Two articles about the round table were published in *Habitat Watch*, the Conference's daily newspaper. The Institute is in the final process of editing the presentations made at the round table for publication.

48. In the area of inter-agency collaboration, INSTRAW was actively involved in and present at the meeting of the Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality as part of the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women, and prepared contributions to the report of the Secretary-General on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes of the United Nations system, which was presented at the coordination segment of the 1997 substantive session of the Economic and Social Council.

49. INSTRAW participated in the symposium on women and mainstreaming organized by the United Nations University at its headquarters (Tokyo, June 1996). For the symposium, the Institute presented three substantive papers related to the concept of mainstreaming gender, gender in the economy and gender in the society.

50. In the Dominican Republic, INSTRAW has been part of the inter-agency efforts carried out by the United Nations system in the country and has participated in the monthly meetings of the heads of United Nations agencies at the duty station.

51. INSTRAW has attended to the discussions of various issues in the Second and Third Committees of the General Assembly, including those on statistics, water, waste management, renewable sources of energy, older persons, migration and the informal sector of the economy.

F. Information, documentation and communication

52. The objectives of the information, documentation and communication programme are to promote the research and training programmes through the preparation of public information materials; to strengthen the channels for worldwide dissemination of information on gender and women and development as related to the Institute's work programme; to reinforce networking and liaison activities with organizations and institutions working in gender and women and development issues; and to develop appropriate communications support in order to facilitate access to information and communications systems of other bodies and organizations in the United Nations system and, wherever possible, to explore and develop new and more effective means of communicating information and ideas related to the empowerment of women.

53. During the period under review, the internal printing facility of INSTRAW complied with the Institute's printing requirements by printing most of the materials needed and supervising the materials printed outside. Various publications, including research studies, numerous Board documents (in three languages), *INSTRAW News* (in three languages) and public information materials, flyers and brochures were printed internally (see annex). In addition, various forms and types of stationery were printed.

54. The Institute entered into a very successful agreement with the United Nations Publications Service by which its publications are sold at the United Nations bookstores in New York and Geneva. Also as part of the agreement, INSTRAW publications will be distributed at many international conferences and fairs.

55. As for the production of public information materials, one special double issue (71 pages) of *INSTRAW News* was printed in 1996. That issue dealt with the advancement of women as a structural matter, the analysis of which included the whole spectrum of social endeavours. It also featured a special focus on Habitat II. The issue included a supplement on the INSTRAW network of focal points. A special issue focusing on women and environmental issues was printed in the first half of 1997 and was presented at the nineteenth special session of the General Assembly in June 1997. That issue included two supplements — one containing strategic objective K from the Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women and the other concerning agreements for sustaining the future environment, such as the various conventions on biodiversity, climate change and desertification. A second issue was printed in 1997 and

centred on capacity-building in the context of environmental issues.

56. The multimedia interactive exhibit officially hosted by INSTRAW for the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations has been displaced in several important cities of the host country of INSTRAW, beginning in one of the most prestigious universities in the city of Santiago, and continuing to the town hall of Dajabon and to Puerto Plata and Jarabacoa. The exhibit is expected to stimulate further interest in the overall work of the United Nations and in INSTRAW activities among students, women's organizations and the Dominican population.

57. In connection with International Women's Day 1997, INSTRAW launched its Web page, which is located at the United Nations Web site. Visitors to the page can get information on the Institute's mandate, its Board of Trustees, its research and training programmes and its publications, as well as information on its network of focal points. The INSTRAW Web page is linked to the WomenWatch project, which was also launched in celebration of International Women's Day, 1997 in New York.

58. INSTRAW participated in the twenty-second session of the Joint United Nations Information Committee, (Geneva, 3-5 July 1996), as well as various ad hoc meetings held at the Secretariat. The Institute, along with other members of the Committee, also participated in a joint exhibition at the World Food Summit (Rome, 13-17 November 1996). INSTRAW publications, flyers and brochures were available for distribution at the exhibit. The Institute's publications were also distributed at Habitat II.

59. The Institute, along with other bodies and agencies of the United Nations system, also participated in the international information fairs organized by the Department of Public Information and held at United Nations Headquarters.

60. To further enhance communication possibilities in extending the outreach of the Institute's work, an e-mail address was installed at the Institute in 1996.

61. The INSTRAW Documentation Centre received numerous documents (approximately 1,400) during the period under review from sources both within and outside the United Nations system on topics related to its work. Those documents are catalogued as received and are thus available for consultation. Each year numerous requests are received from students at both the undergraduate and postgraduate levels for information on gender and women and development issues.

IV. The Institute's advocacy network

62. INSTRAW relies on international networking as an important instrument in carrying out its catalytic function and bases its work on cooperative arrangements with mainstream United Nations organizations and bodies, governmental and non-governmental organizations, academic institutions and women's organizations and groups. The Institute's network of focal points is composed of 41 governmental, non-governmental, academic, research and training institutions located in all regions of the world.

63. Through its networking activities, INSTRAW is able to formulate objectives based on sound knowledge of problems affecting women at the regional and national levels, to transmit grass-roots experiences to decision makers, to secure substantive changes on behalf of women and to promote development policies concerning both men and women.

64. In keeping with its mandate and as reported to the INSTRAW Board of Trustees at its seventeenth session, INSTRAW is reviewing and redefining its relationship with focal points with the objective of establishing a more sound and effective affiliation. Key issues such as objectives and benefits of a networking relationship with focal points, nomination procedures, contributions, and the possibility of increasing the number of focal points in each country are being revised.

V. Financial situation of the Institute

65. INSTRAW is funded solely by voluntary contributions. Since its establishment the Institute has received pledges from more than 72 Member States, both developed and developing countries. Financial stability is crucial to the Institute's ability to continue its research, training and information programmes, as approved by its Board of Trustees. Therefore, fund-raising efforts remain a crucial component of the Institute's programme of activities. To that end, INSTRAW maintains continued contact with donor countries in order to secure the level of contribution required for the implementation of its programme of work. Voluntary contributions received for the biennium 1996-1997, as at the date of the present report, amount to $1,506,922. This amount is expected to increase significantly before the end of the biennium through additional contributions to be received from donor countries that have pledged but have not yet paid their contributions.

66. The Institute wishes to express its recognition to those Member States that have consistently supported INSTRAW through their contributions to the Trust Fund since the Institute's inception, as well as to all those which have joined them more recently.

67. As an autonomous institution, INSTRAW is fully responsible for providing administrative support to all its programmes. This includes financial management and budgetary controls, monitoring of financial commitments, recruitment and personnel administration, procurement and other activities within the delegation of authority granted by the Secretary-General. Despite the limitations imposed by external circumstances and encountered by the Institute during the period under review, INSTRAW has carried out the biennial programme of work.

68. The importance of and need for research, training and information activities related to women and development is a prerequisite not only for the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, but also for the improvement of women's position and status in society. In that regard, the firm support of Member States is essential, as it allows the Institute to carry out its mandate of independent research, the results of which foster policy and policy coordination as well as operational activities.

VI. Conclusions

69. The Institute's activities in research, training, information and documentation place a high priority on the obstacles that limit or impede women from becoming equal partners in development. INSTRAW is at the forefront in establishing new concepts and methods for understanding the specific situation of women in the development process and in broadening the empirical and analytical parameters for such understanding. The work of the Institute contributes to mainstreaming women's concerns into sustainable development policies both within and outside the United Nations system.

70. INSTRAW regards as crucial the empowerment of women and their capacity to participate and influence the decisions and processes that affect their lives. The process of economic and political empowerment is fundamental if women are to break out of the inequitable situations in which they find themselves. The change in perceptions and the integration of women in the development process as equal actors and not as a vulnerable group is central to the work of INSTRAW.

71. The current developmental context requires more in-depth and innovative research to better understand the complexities affecting women throughout their life cycle. Continued efforts in the areas of training and information are also imperative in order to acknowledge and promote women's essential contribution to development and to bridge the gap between the situation of women and the prevailing development practices. The Institute's activities are an integral part of the endeavours of the United Nations to mainstream gender into both policy and operational activities and hence to contribute to the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action.

72. The unique function of the Institute, as the only entity within the United Nations system devoted exclusively to research and training for the integration of women in development, has been stressed both by the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly. A reinforced commitment to research, training and information is fundamental to further progress towards sustainable development and the advancement of women.

Notes

[1] *Measurement and Valuation of Unpaid Contribution: Accounting through Time and Output* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.III.C.3), 1995.

[2] *Valuation of Household Production and the Satellite Accounts* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.III.C.4), 1996.

Annex

Activities carried out by the printing unit during 1996-1997

During the biennium 1996-1997, the printing unit complied with all the printing requirements of the Institute, both by printing most of the materials needed as well as by supervising the materials printed outside, which included full-colour covers and public information materials as well as a training package.

The work of the unit included the preparation of layouts of publications in several languages, proof-reading and monitoring of the work performed outside the Institute, such as preparation of designs, translation and printing, obtaining quotes for services, equipment and supplies needed (including preparation of metal plates, designs and so on). On several occasions the Publications Assistant provided translation services.

The unit is responsible for the worldwide distribution of all printed materials through various means, such as the local post office, express parcel service or pouch.

The unit also provided photocopying services, which amounted to about 90,000 photocopies per year.

The following items were printed during the period:

Reports

Rapport sur l'atelier sous-régional sur statistiques et indicateurs concernant les femmes (Rabat, 13-17 December 1993), 270 pp. Santo Domingo: INSTRAW, October 1996.

National reports from the sub-regional training seminar on women, environmental management and sustainable development (23-27 September 1996), 280 pp. Turin, Italy: INSTRAW and ILO, 1996.

Research studies

Gender Concepts in Development Planning: Basic Approach, 2nd ed. 35 pp. Santo Domingo: INSTRAW, 1996. (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.III.C.1).

Valuation of Household Production and the Satellite Accounts, 277 pp. Santo Domingo: INSTRAW, 1996. (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.III.C.4).

Public information

Brochure: *INSTRAW Biennium 1996/97 Profile*, 1996.

Brochure: *Medición de la Contribución de la Mujer al Desarrollo Implicaciones de Políticas*, 1996.

Brochure: *Measuring Women's Unpaid Work*, April/May 1996 (reprint of 1995 brochure of the United Nations Department of Public Information).

Brochure: *INSTRAW Update: Measuring Unpaid Work*, April 1996.

Brochure: *United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women* (description of the Institute's work) May 1996.

Brochure: *Round Table on Women and Human Settlements in Conflict Zones*, June 1996.

Brochure: Objectifs et recommandations: *Rapport sur l'atelier sous-régional sur statistiques et indicateurs concernant les femmes*.

Brochure: *INSTRAW Focal Points*, September 1996.

Flyer: *What Is INSTRAW?*, October 1996.

Brochure: *Habitat II: Women and Human Settlements in Conflict Zones*, February 1997.

Brochure: *Fourth World Conference on Women: Platform for Action/Strategic Objective K: Women and the Environment*, March 1997.

Brochure: *Agreements for Sustaining the Future Environment*, June 1997.

INSTRAW News

INSTRAW News No. 24/25 — special issue 1996: "The Process of the Advancement of Women".

INSTRAW News No. 26, special issue, first semester 1997: "Earth Summit + 5" and "Women's Vision".

Others

Board documents: 24 documents in English, French and Spanish representing about 12,900 printed pages in February 1996. Seventy-three print orders for 428 pages of documents in English, French and Spanish representing about 42,425 printed pages in February 1997.

Stationery: complimentary slips, memorandum forms, letterhead stationery, facsimile forms, invitations, envelopes and others.